

Pennsylvania's Aid To Cities in Financing Sewage Treatment Plants

BY CHARLES H. YOUNG

PENNSYLVANIA, under 1953 legislation, is helping municipalities defray the cost of operating sewage treatment plants required by the State for the control of water pollution.

Earlier legislation, enacted in 1937, and known as the clean streams law, required construction of the plants. Both the construction and operation costs were to be borne by the municipalities.

The new act, No. 339, marks a change of thinking on the part of the Pennsylvania Legislature since it begins a program of annual subsidies to be paid to municipalities to assist in meeting the costs of the sewage treatment works.

The intent of the Pennsylvania General Assembly was set forth in the preamble of the 1953 act. The preamble is quoted in part and the main provisions are summarized on the following page.

Rules and Regulations

The Pennsylvania Department of Health prepared rules and regulations for the administration of the act. It also prepared application forms for the use of municipalities and municipality authorities in filing construction costs. The rules and regulations are intended primarily to clarify the eligibility of projects, or parts of projects, or items entering into the cost of construction. They stipulate what is required in a general drawing to accompany the applications to show clearly the project for which payment is requested. They explain proportioning costs of projects or parts of projects

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when the total project involves more than is eligible for payment consideration. Under the regulations the costs of acquisition or construction are exclusive of grants or equivalent funds received from the State or Federal Government. The regulations further provide for payments to be made to other than the applicant, since many of the municipal authority projects are operated by the municipality under a lease-back agreement. The regulations also require the documentation of costs and provide for other features.

Allowed in determining the cost of acquisition or construction, or both, of the sewage treatment works, intercepting sewer, and pump station are: cost of the plant or pump station site, or both, and rights of way; engineering costs of the report, plans, specifications, supervision and inspection of construction; contract cost for the allowable treatment facilities and appurtenances, including supplemental contracts; financial costs; legal costs, and interest during construction. All cost data must be documented, and breakdowns of the construction costs and other costs are required where such breakdowns are necessary to establish clearly the cost eligibility of the project.

Experience to Date

A few of the municipalities have experienced difficulties in documenting the costs of their projects, particularly projects constructed in the years shortly after the effective date, September 1, 1937, of the clean streams law. These difficulties, however, have been reduced to date to several cases which are being handled on an individual basis.

A total of 124 applications were filed. For various reasons, the number has been reduced to 103. To date, 92 applications have been processed and the municipalities or municipality authorities have been paid a total of \$798,920.28. These municipalities received 2 percent of the approved costs. The remaining applications are in process.

Even though this legislation was given considerable publicity and form letters were mailed to all municipalities that were believed entitled to payment, a few Pennsylvania municipalities did not take advantage of this legis-

Preamble of Pennsylvania's Act No. 339

"Whereas, The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania under the Act of Assembly approved the twenty-second day of June, one thousand nine hundred thirty-seven (Pamphlet Laws 1987), has required certain municipalities of this Commonwealth to construct sewage treatment plants to abate the pollution of the waters of the Commonwealth and thereby preserve and improve the purity of such waters in the interest of the public health; and,

"Whereas, these municipalities have in the past and will in the future expend large sums of money to acquire and construct sewage treatment plants in accordance with the Clean Streams Program and the aforesaid Act of Assembly, which sewage treat-

ment facilities benefit not only the local municipality but are a benefit to all of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and,

"Whereas, the responsibility to preserve and improve the purity of the waters of the Commonwealth does not rest solely upon municipal government but is also a function and responsibility of State government acting in the interest of the general public health, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in consideration of the benefits resulting from the acquisition and construction, both in the past and in the future, of sewage treatment plants by municipalities . . ."

Main Provisions

1. Commencing July 1, 1954, and annually thereafter, the Commonwealth shall pay toward the cost of operating, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and other expenses relating to sewage treatment plants, an amount not to exceed 2 percent of the costs for the acquisition and construction. The annual payments are to be made to municipalities and municipality authorities which have acquired and constructed sewage treatment works since September 1, 1937. The payments are to be made for the year up to and including December 31 of the year preceding the year in which such payment is made, and as is ascertained by the secretary of health and approved by the Governor.

2. The word "construction" shall include, in addition to the construction of new treatment works,

pumping stations, and intercepting sewers, which are integral parts of the treatment facilities, the altering, improving, or adding to of existing treatment works, pumping stations, and intercepting sewers which are essential to the sewage treatment plant system.

3. The Pennsylvania Department of Health is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the act.

4. The amounts to be paid for the foregoing purposes shall be based upon reports filed with the secretary of health prior to January 31, 1954, and annually thereafter.

5. The sum of \$2 million was appropriated to initiate payments to the municipalities and municipality authorities.

lation by filing applications for payment in 1954.

The reaction to this legislation has been generally favorable. It has been particularly favorable from municipalities which have constructed plants in recent years under high costs and from those municipalities which are preparing to construct plants.

The payments to municipalities to date have ranged from a minimum of \$116.07 to a maximum of \$209,591.72. The latter represents a partial payment; the full payment will amount

to approximately \$250,000. The 2-percent annual payment is estimated to represent approximately 15 to 30 percent of the total annual operating expenses, including debt service, depending on the nature of the project. The payments may be used to reduce annual operating costs of the works, thereby reducing the annual sewer rental costs, or to accelerate debt retirement, or a combination of these. It will be interesting to see whether subsequent legislatures will make appropriations to continue the subsidy payments.

technical publications

Cardiovascular Disease

Data on mortality, prevalence, and control activities

Public Health Service Publication No. 429. 1955. 68 pages.

Designed particularly for use by workers in the heart disease field, this booklet provides information on the mortality and prevalence of cardiovascular-renal disease and on heart disease control activities.

In general, the data permit comparisons among various population groups, among States, or among geographic regions. Also shown are results of case finding among various population groups and for various screening techniques.

Manual of Serologic Tests for Syphilis

Public Health Service Publication No. 411, revised 1955. 106 pages; illustrated. \$1.00.

The latest technical procedures to be observed in the performance of each of the reliable, evaluated serologic tests for syphilis now commonly employed in the United States have been assembled in this manual by the Venereal Disease Research Laboratory in collaboration with the test author-serologists.

Included are the APHA, Hinton, Kahn, Kline, Kolmer, Mazzini, Rein-Bossak, and VDRL tests as well as chapters on general information and general equipment. The appendix describes methods of collection and preservation of sheep blood, preparation of hemolysin, preparation and preservation of complement, use of merthiolate as a bacteriostat, and quantitative determination of spinal fluid protein.

Especially designed for use in laboratories, the manual has a plastic-coated cover and plastic comb binding. It is the fifth edition of the Manual of Serologic Tests for

Syphilis published by the Venereal Disease Program, previously issued as supplements 9, 11, and 22 to the Journal of Venereal Disease Information and VD-Graphic 85.

A Comprehensive Program for Water Pollution Control

Central Columbia River Basin. Public Health Service Publication No. 381. Water Pollution Series No. 69. 1954. 20 pages; illustrated.

Adopted by the Public Health Service from a program developed by the Washington Pollution Control Commission in cooperation with the State Department of Public Health, this program is based on beneficial water uses and related conditions that prevailed on January 1, 1954.

Green Bay Western Shore Drainage Basin. Public Health Service Publication No. 368. Water Pollution Series No. 67. 1955. 42 pages; illustrated.

Developed in cooperation with the State Water Pollution Control Agencies of Michigan and Wisconsin and Federal agencies and adopted by the Public Health Service, this program is based on data available as of January 1, 1954.

Lake Superior Drainage Basin. Public Health Service Publication No. 367. Water Pollution Series No. 66. 1954. 51 pages.

Program prepared in cooperation with the Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin water pollution control agencies on data available as of January 1, 1954.

Mississippi-Iowa-Cedar Rivers Basin. Public Health Service Publication No. 346. Water Pollution Series No. 61. 1955. 41 pages.

Adopted by the Public Health Service from a program developed by the Illinois, Iowa, and Minnesota State

water pollution control agencies, based on beneficial water uses and related conditions that prevailed on July 1, 1953.

Mississippi-Salt Rivers Basin. Public Health Service Publication No. 366. Water Pollution Series No. 65. 1954. 24 pages; illustrated.

Adopted by the Public Health Service from a program developed by the Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri State water pollution control agencies, based on beneficial water uses and related conditions that prevailed on January 1, 1954.

Mississippi-Wapsipinicon and Tributaries Rivers Basin. Public Health Service Publication No. 347. Water Pollution Series No. 62. 1954. 47 pages; illustrated.

Adopted by the Public Health Service from a program developed by the Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin State water pollution control agencies, based on the beneficial water uses and related conditions that prevailed on July 1, 1953.

Salaries of Local Public Health Workers, August 1954

Public Health Service Publication No. 425. 1955. 41 pages.

This report contains data from the 5th study of salaries of selected classifications of public health workers in official agencies and from the 15th study of public health nurses employed by local nonofficial health agencies and local boards of education.

Presented are salary data by \$200-intervals, according to population group served and by regions of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, for each of the following occupations:

Local health officers (medical), public health physicians (exclusive of health officers), sanitary engineers, sanitarians (including other sanitation personnel), veterinarians, professional laboratory workers, health educators, and public health nurses (supervising, staff, and clinic).

technical publications

Meeting the Challenge of Cancer

Public Health Service Publication No. 419. 1955. 23 pages. 15 cents.

This booklet supplements *The Challenge of Cancer*, a 116-page book by Lester Grant, published in 1950 under the joint sponsorship of the National Cancer Institute of the Public Health Service and the National Cancer Institute of Canada. It presents some of the accomplishments in cancer research since that time.

In the supplement, prepared by the National Cancer Institute, the first section delineates the sources of financial support for cancer research and the programs of leading organizations. It also discusses the post-war shift in emphasis from basic to clinical research. The next two sections deal with advances in diagnostic and therapeutic technique and with promising areas of research in these fields. The chemotherapy of cancer is given special attention in a separate section; a review of recent studies in the epidemiology of cancer and a list of source materials complete the supplement.

Grant and Award Programs of the National Institutes of Health

Public Health Service Publication No. 415. 1955. 22 pages.

Scientists, public health workers, students, and others interested will find in this publication comprehensive information about the grant and award programs authorized by the Public Health Service Act and administered by the National Institutes of Health, Public Health Service. Details are given for the types, scope, and purposes of the grants and

awards; availability of funds; eligibility requirements for recipients; location of training; and opportunities afforded trainees.

The grants and awards are offered to encourage and support research, investigation, and training in health, medical, dental, and allied fields for which other funds have not been provided or which might not otherwise be conducted.

Evaluation in Mental Health

A review of the problem of evaluating mental health activities

Public Health Service Publication No. 413. 1955. 292 pages. \$2.00.

Problems and processes of evaluative studies are reported from a survey made by a subcommittee of the National Advisory Mental Health Council. The survey, begun in 1951, was designed to assist professional workers in improving the scientific basis for mental health programs and in evaluating the effects of their practical operations.

The report of this survey assembles an annotated bibliography of the evaluative studies and presents observations and suggestions arising from collection and analysis of the materials.

Reported Tuberculosis Morbidity and Other Data Calendar Year 1953

Public Health Service Publication No. 442. 1954. 27 pages. 25 cents.

This second published summary of the data supplied to the Public Health Service on the annual tuber-

culosis report form PHS-1393 tabulates newly reported tuberculosis cases by source of morbidity report, activity status, form and extent of the disease, race, sex, and age. Data on X-ray case-finding activities, mortality, and public health nursing visits are also included.

The data, received from all the States, the District of Columbia, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, are intended primarily for reference use. Summaries giving limitations and uses of the data are prepared for each analytical table.

Meeting Community Health Needs

Public Health Service Publication No. 403. (Revision of You'll Want to Know About Your Hospital Program, PHS Pub. No. 8, May 1951.) Revised 1954. 1-fold leaflet.

Operation of the Hospital and Medical Facilities Survey and Construction (Hill-Burton) Act is explained in this leaflet. It tells what community facilities are eligible to receive Federal assistance under the law as amended in 1954. And it explains the application requirements and procedures for obtaining Federal assistance in building a hospital or related health facility. The agency administering the hospital and medical facilities survey and construction program in each State is listed.

This section carries announcements of all new Public Health Service publications and of selected new publications on health topics prepared by other Federal Government agencies.

Publications for which prices are quoted are for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. Orders should be accompanied by cash, check, or money order and should fully identify the publication. Public Health Service publications which do not carry price quotations, as well as single sample copies of those for which prices are shown, can be obtained without charge from the Public Inquiries Branch, Public Health Service, Washington 25, D. C.

The Public Health Service does not supply publications issued by other agencies.
